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Sparkling Gems. The humorist contributor looked in upon the editor of Answers upon his busy day. The humorist contributor should not have looked in upon the editor of Answers on his busy day. The editor of Answers can't feel humorous and busy at the same time. What was more, the humorist contributor would not go. At last the editor of Answers decided to stop being busy for one moment and be sarcastic. "That was a gem, that joke you sent me," he said in his usual dry tone. The contributor drew himself up with pride. "Sir," he said, "you flatter me."

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**Ramsey Milholland** by Booth Tarkington

Illustrations by Irwin Myers

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### "PEACH OF A PUNCH."

Synopsis.—With his grandfather, and Ramsey Milholland is watching the "Declaration Day Parade" in the home town. The old gentleman, a veteran of the Civil war, endeavors to impress the youngster with the significance of the great conflict, and many years afterward, Ramsey, now a distinguished for remarkable ability, though his pronounced dislikes are arithmetic, "Recitations" and German. In sharp contrast to Ramsey's backwardness is the precocity of little Dora Vocum, a young lady whom in his bitterness he denigrates as "Teacher's Pet." In high school, where he and Dora are classmates, Ramsey continues to feel that the girl delights to manifest her superiority, and the vindictiveness he generates becomes alarming, culminating in the resolution that some day he will "show" her. At a class picnic Ramsey is captured bag and baggage by Milla Rust, the class beauty, and endures the agonies of his first love. Ramsey's parents object to Milla and wish he'd taken up with Dora Vocum. Ramsey kisses Milla. Then Milla suddenly leaves town. She marries. Ramsey enters the state university and there is Dora Vocum again. Ramsey meets Dora in a World War debate and is ingloriously vanquished.

### CHAPTER VII.—Continued.

He was so right. In regard to his own performance, at least, that, thereupon drying up utterly, he proceeded to stand, a speechless figure in the midst of a multitudinous silence, for an eternity lasting forty-five seconds. He made a racking effort, and at the end of this epoch found words again. "In making my argument in this debate, I would state that—"

"Two minutes!" said the chairman. "Refutation by the negative. Miss D. Vocum. Two minutes."

"I waive them," said Dora, primly. "I submit that the affirmative has not refuted the argument of the negative."

"Very well." With his gavel the chairman sharply tapped the desk before him. "The question is now before the house. 'Resolved, that Germany is both morally and legally justified in her invasion of Belgium.' All those in favor of the—"

But here there was an interruption of a kind never before witnessed during any proceedings of the Lumen society. It came from neither of the debaters, who still remained standing at their desks until the vote settling their comparative merits in argument should be taken. The interruption was from the rear row of seats along the wall, where sat new members of the society, freshmen not upon the program of the evening. A loud nasal voice was heard from this quarter, a loud but nasal voice, shrill as well as nasal, and full of a strange hot passion. "Mr. Chairman!" it cried. "Look-a-here, Mr. Chairman! I demand to be heard! You gotta gimme my say, Mr. Chairman! I'm a-gonna have my say! You look-a-here, Mr. Chairman!"

Shocked by such a breach of order, and by the unseemly violence of the speaker, not only the chairman but everyone else looked there. A short, strong figure was on its feet, gestulating fiercely, and the head belonging to it was a large one with too much curly black hair, a flat swarthy face, shiny and not immaculately shaven; there was an impression of ill-chosen clothes, too much fat red lip, too much tooth, too much eyeball. Fred Mitchell recognized this violent interrupter as one Linski, a fellow freshman who sat next him in one of his classes. "What's that cuss up to?" Fred wondered, and so did others. Linski showed them.

He pressed forward, shoving himself through the two rows in front of him till he emerged upon the green carpet of the open space, and as he came, he was cyclonic with words. "You don't put no such stuff as this over, I tell you!" he shouted in his hot, nasal voice. "This here's a free country, and you call yourself a debating society, do you? Lemme tell you I belong to a debating society in Chicago, where I come from, and them fellas up there, they'd think they'd oughta be shot for a fake like what you people are tryin' to put over here, tonight. I come down here to git some more education, and pay fer it, too, in good hard money I've made sweatin' in a machine shop up there in Chicago; but if this is the kind of education I'm a-gonna git, I better go on back there. You call this a square debate, do you?"

He advanced toward the chairman's platform, shaking a frantic fist. "Well, if you do, you got another think comin', my capitalists' friend! You went and give out the question whether it's right for Cholimny to go through Belgium; and what do you do for the Cholimny side? You pick out this here big stiff!"

hand at the paralyzed Ramsey—"You pick out a boob like that for the Cholimny side, a poor fish that gits stage-fright so bad he don't know whether he's talkin' or dead; or else he fakes it; because he's a speaker so bum it looks more to me like he was faking. You git this big stiff to fake the Cholimny side, and then you go and stick up a gill against him that's got brains and makes a pacifist's argument that wins the case against the Cholimnys like cuttin' through hog lard! But you ain't a-gonna git away with it, mister. Lemme tell you right here and now, I may be a mix blood, but I got some Cholimny in me with the rest what I got, and before you vote on this here question you gotta hear a few words from somebody that can talk! This whole war is a capitalists' war, Belgium as much as Cholimny, and the United States is sellin' its soul to the capitalists' right now, I tell you, takin' sides against Cholimny. Orders for explosives and ammunition and guns and Red Cross supplies is comin' into this country by the millions, and the capitalists' United States is fat already on the blood of the workers of Europe! Yes, it is, and I'll have my say, you boobjaw faker, and you can hammer your ole gavel to pieces at me!"

He had begun to shriek; moisture fell from his brow and his mouth; the scandalized society was on its feet, moving nervously into groups. Evidently the meeting was about to dis-



"I'll Have My Say!" the Frenzied Linski Screamed.

integrate. "I'll have my say!" the frenzied Linski screamed. "You try to put up this capitalists' trick and work a fake to carry over this debate against Cholimny, but you can't work it on me, lemme tell you! I'll have my say!"

The outraged chairman was wholly at a loss how to deal with the "unprecedented situation"—so he defined it, quite truthfully; and he continued to pound upon the desk, while other clamors began to rival Linski's; shouts of "Put him out!" "Order!" "Shut up, Freshman!" "Turn him over to the sophomores!"

"This meeting is adjourned!" belowered the chairman, and there was a thronging toward the doors, while the frothing Linski asserted: "I'm a-gonna git my say, I tell you! I'll have my say! I'll have my say!"

He had more than that, before the hour was over. A moment after he emerged from the building and came out, still hot, upon the cool, dark campus, he found himself the center of a group of his own classmates whom he at first mistook for sophomores, such was their manner.

As this group broke up a few minutes later, a youth running to join it, scenting somewhat of interest, detained one of those who were departing. "What's up? What was that squealing?"

"Oh, nothing. We just talked to that Linski. Nobody else touched him, but Ramsey Milholland gave him a peach of a punch on the snout."

"Whoopie!"

Ramsey was laconic in response to inquiries upon this subject. When some one remarked: "You served him right for calling you a boob and a poor fish and so on before all the society, girls and all," Ramsey only said: "That wasn't what I hit him for." He declined to explain further.

### CHAPTER VIII.

"The way I look at it, Ramsey," Fred Mitchell said, when they reached their apartment, whether a benevolent senior, Colburn, accompanied them, "the way I look at it, this Linski kind of paid you a compliment, after all,

when he called you a fake. He must have thought you anyway looked as if you could make a better speech than you did. Oh, golly!"

And as Ramsey groaned, the jovial Mitchell gave himself up to the divan and the mirth. "Oh, oh, oh, golly!" he sputtered.

"Never you mind, Brother Milholland," Colburn said gently. "The Lumen is used to nervous beginners, I've seen dozens in my time, just like you; and some of 'em got to be first rate before they quit. Besides, this crazy Linski is all that anybody'll ever remember about tonight's meeting anyhow. There never was any such outbreak as that in my time, and I guess there never was in the whole history of the society. We'll probably suspend him until he apologizes to the society—I'm on the board, and I'm in favor of it. Who is the bird, anyhow? He's in your class."

"I never saw him before," Ramsey responded from the deep chair, where he had moodily thrown himself; and, returning to his brooding upon his oratory, "Oh, murder!" he moaned.

"Well," said the senior, "you'll know him when you see him again. You put your mark on him where you can see it, all right!" He chuckled. "I suppose I really ought to have interfered in that, but I decided to do a little astronomical observation, about fifty feet away, for a few minutes. I'm way behind in my astronomy, anyhow. Do you know this Linski, Brother Mitchell?"

"I've talked to him a couple of times on the campus," said Fred. "He's in one of my classes. He's about the oldest in our class, I guess—a lot older than us, anyhow. He's kind of an anarchist or something; can't talk more'n five minutes any time without gettin' off some bug stuff about 'capitalism.' He said the course in political economy was all 'capitalism' and the prof was bought by Wall Street."

"Poor old Prof. Craig!" Colburn laughed. "He gets fifteen hundred a year."

"Yes; I'd heard that myself, and I told Linski, and he said he had an uncle workin' in a steel mill got twice that much, but it didn't make any difference, ole Craig was bought by Wall Street. He said 'capitalism' better look out; he and the foreign-born workmen were goin' to take this country some day, and that was one of the reasons he was after an education. He talked pretty strong pro-German, too—about the war in Europe—but I sort of thought that was more because he'd be pro-anything that he thought would help upset the United States than because he cared much about Germany."

"Yes," said Colburn, "that's how he sounded tonight. I guess there's plenty more like him in the cities, too. That reminds me: I'd better arrange a debate on immigration for the Lumen. We'll put Brother Milholland for the negative, this time."

Ramsey started violently. "See here—"

But the senior reassured him. "Just wanted to see you jump," he explained. "Don't fear; you've done your share."

"I should think I have!" Ramsey groaned.

"Yes; you won't be called on again this term. By the way," said Colburn, thoughtfully, "that was a clever girl you had against you tonight. I don't believe in pacifism much, myself, but she used it very niftily for her argument. Isn't she from your town, this Miss Vocum?"

Fred nodded.

"Well, she's a clever young thing," said the senior, still thoughtful. And he added: "Graceful girl, she is."

At this, the roommates looked at him with startled attention. Ramsey was so roused as to forget his troubles and sit forward in his chair.

"Yes," said the musing Colburn, "she's a mighty pretty girl."

"What?"

This exclamation was a simultaneous one; the astounded pair stared at him in blank incredulity.

"Why, don't you think so?" Colburn mildly inquired. "She seems to me very unusual looking."

"Well, yes," Fred assented, emphatically. "We're with you there!"

"Extraordinary eyes," continued Colburn. "Lovely figure, too; altogether a strikingly pretty girl. Handsome, I should say, perhaps. Yes, 'handsome' rather than 'pretty.'" He looked up from a brief reverie. "You fellows known her long?"

"You bet!" said Ramsey.

"She made a splendid impression on the Lumen," Colburn went on. "I don't remember that I ever saw a first appearance there that quite equaled it. She'll probably have a brilliant career in the society, and in the university, too. She must be a very fine sort of a person." He deliberated within himself a few moments longer, then, realizing that his hosts and brethren did not respond with any heartiness—or with anything at all—to the theme, he changed it, and asked them what they thought about the war in Europe.

"They talked of the war drowsily for a while; it was an interesting but not an exciting topic; the thing they spoke of was so far away. After a few moments of fervor, the conversation languished, and Brother Colburn rose to go.

"To go over and help hang their d—d kaiser!"

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

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